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## IV. FEDERAL EXPORT ASSISTANCE

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### Market Advisory Services

As a service to Canadian business, the federal government maintains trade officers in 67 countries around the world. These representatives provide assistance to Canadian exporters and aid foreign buyers in locating Canadian sources of supply. In addition to providing the link between buyer and seller, the trade officer advises Canadian exporters on all phases of marketing, including identification of export opportunities, assessment of market competition, introduction to foreign business people and government officials, screening and recommending of agents, guidance on terms of payment and assistance with tariff or access problems. Trade officers also play an active role in looking for market opportunities and encouraging promotion efforts.

An additional source of information is the group of geographic trade divisions at the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa. Each of these offices concentrates on markets in specific geographical regions, in this case Latin America and the Caribbean. They are the central government link in Canada for the trade officers abroad. In the case of Panama, the trade officers in San Jose are in constant contact with their counterparts in the Latin America and Caribbean Branch in Ottawa (Address: Central America and Caribbean Trade Development Division – Latin America and Caribbean Branch, Department of External Affairs, 125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2, Telephone (613) 996-7059 Telex: 053-3745). This office can provide the following type of general information:

- market information, including economic outlooks for individual countries and information on the market for particular products;
- market access information on tariff rates, regulations, licensing, non-tariff barriers, product standards, required documents etc.; and
- publications, including editions of this publication, *Guides for Canadian Exporters*, and country briefs on smaller markets.

The geographic trade divisions are also responsible for assisting and advising exporters on marketing of their